SECOND EDITION

CHRIST'S BATTLES WITH THE PHARISEES

EDWARD A. MARSHALL, PH.D., D.D.

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A STRIKING, STARTLING and REVEALING MESSAGE

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BY
EDWARD A. MARSHALL
Author of
"Christianity Compared with Non-Christian Religions," "The Disciples of Christ's School," "Christ, the Master Soul-Winner," "Jesus Christ Compared with Non-Christian Teachers," "How Christ Lived and Labored in Palestine," etc.

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CHAPTER I

CHRIST'S CHARGES AGAINST THE PHARISEES

THE reason for the long, severe conflicts between Christ and the Pharisees was that when Christ came and presented His divine credentials showing Him to be the promised Messiah, the Pharisees in their unbelief stepped out into the arena and challenged Him.

In Nazareth He read His claim as given in prophecy, and added, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears," which caused them to rise up and thrust Him out of the city—from that day the battle was on and it never ceased. John sums the whole conflict up in a single sentence, "He came unto his own and his own received him not."

The same credentials which Christ presented to the Pharisees showing that He was the Son of God, and which they boldly rejected, have since convinced hundreds of millions of people whose minds have been open to the truth.

The purpose of this volume is to present the differences between them and to weigh, to the very end, the charges and counter-charges which were made. We shall consider Christ's charges against the Pharisees first.

(1) MAKING THE WORD OF GOD OF NONE EFFECT

The first accusation against the Pharisees which we shall consider, is recorded in Mark 7:13, "Making the word of God of none effect through your traditions." Christ did not charge the Pharisees with throwing away the Scriptures, but

of annulling their teachings by substitution. The Jews did not deny the inspiration of the Old Testament writings. In fact, some of them leaned over backward in their efforts to keep straight in this particular, as the following quotation from their traditions will show. "The guilt of changing those little hooks which distinguish between certain Hebrew letters is declared to be so great that if such a thing were done the world would be destroyed." This sounds strangely loyal compared with the boldness of some modern writers who cut out whole sections from the Bible with impunity. But, alas, fidelity of the Pharisees to the Hebrew alphabet, as found in the Sacred Writings, did not include fidelity to the spiritual meaning they taught. This is where Christ and the Pharisees parted company.

Even if a Rabbi taught the opposite from what the Bible statement clearly implied, he did not consider that he was denying Bible inspiration. The way he got around it is explained by Dr. Giekie, who tells of one of the Rabbis who "boasted that every verse of the Bible was capable of six hundred thousand different interpretations." After the Rabbis had voted this liberty to themselves there was no bridle that could hold them. "If the law of God interfered with their worldly interests, their profit or their gain, they fearlessly made void the law by the use of ingenius traditional interpretations." A few illustrations here may suffice. Others will be found later.

The Sabbath day's journey had been fixed at two thousand cubits, three thousand six hundred thirty-nine feet, although no specific distance was set by Moses. There had been two thousand cubits between the people and the ark when on the march so the Rabbis settled on this as being the limit of the Sabbath day's journey. But ofttimes a Jew wished to go farther. To make this possible the Rabbis resorted to many evasive schemes. If a person was on the road when the Sabbath began he was permitted to look ahead, see a tree or some object two thousand cubits distant and say, "My Sabbath place shall be at its trunk." He could then go two thousand cubits beyond the tree because his Sabbath journey did not begin until he had arrived there. However, the Rabbis taught that his sentence must be definite. If he only said, "My

Sabbath place shall be under it," he is guilty because it is too general and indefinite.

If a person previously knew that he must make a journey on Sabbath he took some food on Friday and placed portions of it at points two thousand cubits apart until the destination was reached, calling each place his Sabbath home. Then on Sabbath he could make the journey without breaking the law because he would at no time in the journey be over two thousand cubits from the places he had called home.

The law given in Exodus regarding the first-born of clean beasts was that the animal must be offered as a sacrifice to Jehovah. The fat was to be burned upon the altar and the flesh given to the priests for their maintenance. But the covetous Rabbis worked out a plan for evading this loss. The possessor of a first-born animal sold a portion, "even one-thousandth part," "a piece the size of an ear," to a Gentile, which made him a partner, and frustrated the use of the animal for sacrificial purposes.

An example of their juggling with Scripture texts is seen in the declaration that everyone ought to sleep a portion of the Sabbath day. They taught that "Sleep on Sabbath is a delight" and that it had reference to the words of the prophet, "and call the Sabbath a delight." Please read Isaiah 58:13 and see if you think they strained the verse to prove their point.

(2) THE TRADITIONS OF THE ELDERS

One of the sharpest contentions between Christ and the Pharisees is found in Matthew 15:1-3, which reads, "Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the traditions of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your traditions?" This charge of the Pharisees and the counter-charge of Christ formed the basis of the battle which lasted through life, yea, and is still on, for the Jews still cling to the traditions and Christ still holds to His Word.

What were these traditions which Christ opposed? "The Jews called them the Oral Law, decaring that God gave them to Moses by word of mouth upon Mount Sinai, at the same

time He gave him the written law." It is generally understood, however, that they were unwritten comments by various Rabbis, covering a period of about one thousand years, and that they were passed orally from one generation to another. No attempt seems to have been made to collect them until 220 A.D., in the time of "Jehudah the holy." The collection was not written with any completeness until 500 A.D., "as it was thought to be a religious offense to commit any examples to writing."

These traditions were said to be based on the Mosaic Law but the Rabbis themselves admitted that some of the teaching was connected to the law "only as by a hair."

As the years passed, it became more and more a high honor for a Rabbi to be quoted as an authority. Thus the traditions grew and grew until at last schools arose for their study and development. The most famous of these were the schools of Hillel and of Shammai in the generation before Jesus. The contention between these two schools was so bitter that on one occasion a union debate was broken up by a fight in which some were killed. These schools pressed their traditional teachings upon the people but they neglected to instruct them also in the Scriptures. By the time Christ began His ministry, the land was flooded with traditions and the Old Testament was treated as second in importance.

Some of the Rabbis discouraged Bible study. One said, "Habituate not your children to read the Bible too much, lest they be carried away with it." Pirke Aboth says, "A boy when five years old should be instructed in the Bible; when ten years old, the Mishna." One of the Rabbis advised to cease teaching children the Bible at seven to eight years of age and as soon as a boy's mind is able to understand, teach him the Talmud. "Reading the Bible was for the beginner only," said one Rabbi, "Afterward let him devote all his days to Gamara." Again, "Everyone is bound to divide the time of his study into three parts. One-third to be devoted to the written law; one-third to Mishna and one-third to Gamara." Two-thirds of their study was to be spent on Traditions and only one-third on the Bible.

The Traditions of the Elders were for the most part brief epigrams giving instruction on life's duties. These grew to

be so taxing that they came to be called by the Rabbis, "The yoke of the Law." Their burdensome character called forth frequent adverse comments from Christ and later from the Apostles. In Matthew 23:4, Jesus pictured the pitiful condition of men under this Pharisaical yoke which He saw was everywhere galling the necks of His chosen people. He said, "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."

The burdensome character of this yoke of traditions was perpetual. The law was cut up into thousands of single commands concerning every conceivable thing in practical life, each having a moral standard of value. This kept the devotee keyed up to a high pitch of tension for fear some technicality would be violated. Such a yoke must have held a morbid conscience in continual torture. Examples of this may be found strewn throughout this volume so that only a few need be given here.

"If one removes a bundle of reeds (on Sabbath) by lifting one end at a time he is not guilty but if he lifts it all from the ground he is guilty."

"When one puts on his shoes he should commence with the right one and when he takes them off he should commence with the left one." "In bathing, begin with the right side."

A woman could not go out on Sabbath with a key, a box of Cachous (for perfuming the breath) or a perfume bottle. Some Rabbis taught that she could take the box and bottle out if they were empty, i.e., she would not be tempted to use them.

Rabbah was once traveling with a caravan. He forgot to give thanks for some time. "What shall I do," said he. "If I tell them I must go back (to give thanks) they will say, 'Do it here.' It is therefore best that I say I have forgotten a golden dove and must go back and fetch it and ask them to wait here for me." Thus he justified a falsehood on the ground of, "Let us do evil that good may come."

"It is unlawful to extinguish fire on a holy day, even though a man should see his house burning." "It is unlawful to extinguish split wood, either for the sake of saving it from being burned, or to keep a pot from being smoked, that is

to say, if he can keep it from being smoked without extinguishing the fire, as by removing it from one fire to another. But if he has no other fire, then the extinguishing is lawful, that the pot be not smoked. Here the Jew was permitted to extinguish a fire in order to keep a cooking vessel from being smoked but he could not put out a fire to save his dwelling. No wonder Jesus once exclaimed, "Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel" (Matt. 23:24).

"If a man has a bad dream he must fast the next day even if it is the Sabbath, but if it is the Sabbath, then he must fast another day because he fasted on Sabbath when he should have enjoyed himself by eating large fish, the best of garlic and a dish of beetroot," etc. (Ibid, fol. 31B).

The Mishna says that it is a greater offense to teach anything contrary to the voice of the Rabbis, than to contradict Scripture itself—"He who expounds Scripture in opposition to Tradition has no share in the world to come"—"He who reads diligently the traditions receives a reward from God"—"My son, give more heed to the words of the Rabbis than to the words of the law." What if Jesus had let the Pharisees have their way and today the whole world was under the rule of the Traditions?

A few testimonials from modern times concerning the Talmud and its laws will show that thinking men hold the same view as Christ did regarding their source and value. Rev. Alexander McCaul, Professor in King's College, London, says in his most valuable work, *The Old Paths*, "The promised German translation of the Talmud, if ever completed, must, without any discussion overthrow Talmudism." "Its exhibition in any European language is the most fatal attack that can be made on its authority. It needs only to be seen as it is in order to be rejected."

"Even those who have studied the Talmud with patriotic sympathy allow it is a literary wilderness."

Another writer says of the Judaism which has come down to us, "Modern Judaism, or the religion of the Oral Law, cannot bear the slightest investigation. Its existence depends altogether upon blind faith. As long as a man is willing to deliver up his understanding into the hands of the Rabbis,

and at their bidding believe that his right hand is his left, as they require, so long he may be a zealous professor of Judaism."

(3) SELF-RIGHTEOUS

The third accusation against the Pharisees was that they were "self-righteous" (Luke 18: 9-14). "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20), and His direct accusation, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts" (Luke 16:15), discloses the settled belief of the Pharisees concerning their own spiritual condition.

The Jews knew that they were God's chosen people. The word "chosen" grew in significance. It came to mean license, liberty, exemption, privileged class, and a number of other things which the Pharisees read into it for their particular benefit.

The Pharisee's use of the word "I" in his prayer, his self-exaltation over the publican and the haughty enumeration of his meritorious deeds, proves that Jesus read the character of this sect correctly. Their teaching, that the great angel Patzhatziah is appointed to present the merits of Israel before Jehovah and that the person who blows the trumpet on New Year's day is directed to pray for angels who "are desirous and willing to justify Israel," shows that they thought their standing before God could be effectively altered by personal merit.

A glimpse at their view of justification will make Christ's accusation even more called for. In Ibid 1, we read, "Everyone of the children of man has merits and sins. If his merits exceed his sins, he is righteous."

But Isaiah wrote, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6), and Ezekiel wrote, "All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned" (Ezek. 18:20). "The soul that sinneth it shall die." God nowhere promises we can put "good deeds" as a credit against evil in obtaining salvation. Forgiveness has nothing to do where personal merit attempts to pay the debt of sin.

The Pharisees placed great confidence in the meritorious

work of Abraham and Isaac. Ibid, p. 105 says, "They depend on the righteousness of the first patriarch, and rest on the merit of the only peculiar son and are secure in the perfection and rectitude of the father of the nation." But Abraham did not trust in his own righteousness in securing salvation, for the Scripture declares, "Abraham believed God and it (faith) was accounted unto him for righteousness." What profit is it for the Jews to trust that which Abraham did not dare trust?

The Rabbis said, "Attentively view the ashes of Isaac, heaped upon the altar," but Isaac was not even slain. He was redeemed by God's sacrifice, the ram from the thicket, a type of Christ.

No greater evidence of Pharisaic self-righteousness or proof of their claims to personal merit, need be found than the following, to prove that Christ's accusation against the sect was correct. "Rav Shesheth, when fasting, and after repeating his usual prayers, used to say: 'Lord of the worlds, it is revealed before Thee that when the temple stood, a man who sinned brought a sacrifice, and only the fat and blood of the same was offered, and thus atonement made: now I am fasting, and my fat and blood are being diminished in consequence, may it please Thee that my fat and blood, thus diminished, be accepted as if offered on the altar before Thee and Thou be reconciled to me'" (Ibid fol. 17A).

Jesus tried many times and in many ways to reach the Pharisees' hearts, and show them themselves. He gave them the parable of the vineyard but all the response they made was that "they observed that he spake of them." He gave them the beautiful story of the marriage of the king's son but they grew indignant and tried to "entangle him in his talk." One day He dined with a Pharisee and gave the assembled guests such a talk as He never had given anywhere before, but they only tried to catch Him, and they provoked Him to speak of many things. One day after Jesus had spoken of spiritual blindness, the Pharisees said, "Are we blind also?" Jesus said unto them. "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth" (John 9). "We see" was their proud boast, but to Christ, who knew their hearts, it spelled "Blindness." How significant are the words in the next chapter, Jesus said as He was still

speaking to them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." But no matter how clearly Jesus presented their case they never confessed that they were wrong.

One day, after He had preached in the Jerusalem Temple and "many believed on him," He said to them, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." However. this intimation of the need of freedom was too much for the self-righteous Pharisees. They wanted it distinctly understood by both Christ and the audience that His statement did not include them because they did not need it. Said they, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, ye shall be made free?" Jesus replied, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. If the Son shall make you free ye shall be free indeed." But His gracious invitation failed to win them to surrender, for the chapter closes saying, "Then they took up stones to stone him."

Jewish self-righteousness is seen again in their trusting to their own merit in keeping the Sabbath. A Rabbi Youkhanon said, "Whosoever observes the Sabbath as it ought to be kept, although he should be guilty of the worship of idols like Enos, it shall be forgiven him" (Gemara, Sabbath).

Another ingenious tradition, evidently composed to afford a good time on Sabbath, was given by Rabbi Symeon as follows, "Every one who discharges the duty of eating three meals on the Sabbath, will be delivered from the following three calamities: namely, from the painful judgments at the coming of the Messiah; from the condemnation of Gehinnem, or purgatory, and from the consequences of the war of Gog and Magog."

"As the merits and sins of man are weighed at the hour of his death so likewise every year, on the festival of New Year's Day, the sins of everyone that cometh into the world are weighed against his merits. Everyone who is found righteous is sealed unto life. Everyone who is found wicked

is sealed unto death. But the judgment of the intermediate class is suspended until the day of Atonement" (Hilchoth T' shrivah, c. III. 3).

(4) THE SABBATH

Everyone who desecrates the day, and declares that he intends to make a journey on it, or speaks either of buying or selling, and he who draws water, and has not provided it upon the sixth day, and he who lifts a burden in order to take it out of his dwelling place or out of his house, shall die."

"Whosoever removes coals to prevent the public from being injured is guilty."

"If a man starts to write a letter or contract on Sabbath, as soon as he has written two letters of the alphabet he is guilty and must be stoned."

"If a traveler be overtaken by Sabbath he must not carry his purse. He may give it to a Gentile to carry to town but if no Gentile is present he may carry it less than four ells, then lay it down, pick it up and carry it less than four ells further, and continue this until he reaches home."

To carry a pocket handkerchief in the pocket is a capital offense so it is carried tied around the knee like a garter. This was done in London by Jews less than a century ago.

Hair dressing was termed "building," so one woman could not do this work for another on Sabbath.

A blind man was forbidden to carry a staff as it was bearing a burden. A person could not wear sandals with nails as it was bearing burdens.

Everyone had to search his pockets before the Sabbath to see if they contained anything which was forbidden to be carried on that day.

The members of a special fraternity were often grouped along a single street. In order for them to eat together on Sabbath they put chains across the two ends of the street in which the members of this special fraternity lived, and called the enclosed portion a single dwelling. The food was then put in a common hall on Friday and it became a part of the dwelling of each.

If one is born on Sabbath he will die on Sabbath, paying forfeit for its desecration at his birth.

It was forbidden to write two letters, either with the right or left hand whether the same or different sizes, different inks or different languages, with anything that will make a mark; or even to write two letters, one on each side of a corner of two walls, or on the two leaves of a writing tablet if they could be read together. But they might be written on any dark fluid, on sap of fruit trees or on road dust, on sand, or on anything in which writing did not remain. If written with the hand turned upside down, or with the foot or mouth or elbow it was not illegal.

R. Joseph said: "Once I was standing before Rabbi and saw that he took the knife and made passes with it over a basket. And I said to him: 'Does master intend to sharpen it or to remove the fat?' And he said, 'To remove the fat.' But I saw that he intended to sharpen it. This was a ruse but it was not to be proclaimed to the people."

A child's cart could be moved on Festival days only if run on a carpet or cloth and did not remove the soil so as to make a furrow. It could be handled on Sabbath because it was classed as a vessel since it usually held a child.

If a man extinguished a lamp on Sabbath he was not guilty provided he did it for fear of robbers, evil spirits, or because of a sick person, but he could not extinguish the light to save the oil, the wick or the lamp.

Long controversies were held by the Rabbis as to whether an egg, laid on Sabbath could be eaten, according to Exodus 16: 22-26.

Bathing on Sabbath carried the following restrictions. One may warm himself at the hearth fire and then go and bathe in cold water but he could not bathe in cold water and then go and warm himself at the fire because he dries the water that is on him. The school of Shammai taught that, "One may pour hot water upon cold but not cold upon hot." The rival school of Hillel taught that one could do either if he used a cup to pour with.

Jesus ignored these ceremonials of tradition, declaring them to be "burdens grievous to be borne." He defended the disciples in plucking the grains of wheat for food on Sabbath and healed people, declaring that "The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day."—Read Matthew 12: 1-8.

(5) BEING CALLED "RABBI"

A fifth accusation against the Pharisaic scribes was their seeking to be called of men, "Rabbi, Rabbi." Against this practice Christ warned His disciples saying, "Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."

The name "Rabbi" seems to have come originally from the Chaldees and was given to their masters, chiefs of various classes and the principal officers of the court. The Jews used it as an honorary, distinguishing title for their teachers of the law, a position which had been assigned to the priests by Moses but which the Rabbis had arrogated to themselves.

Every Rabbi was supposed to have a trade and to support himself by hand labor. To obviate this they created a public sentiment through their traditions to help them secure an easier mode of living. "To get a Rabbi for a son-in-law, and provide for him, was to secure a blessing." "To marry the daughter of one was to advance one's self to heaven." Thus the Rabbis secured marriage relationships with the wealthiest families. They could also become partners in prosperous commercial enterprises.

"The fear of thy Rabbi is as the fear of God."

"Thou must consider no honor greater than the honor of the Rabbis."

Regarding the duty of Jewish citizens, the scribes taught, "Neither is he to salute his Rabbi, nor to return his salutation in the same manner that salutations are given and returned among friends. On the contrary, he is to bow down before the Rabbi, and say to him, with reverence and honor, Peace be unto thee, Rabbi."

"These laws were not mere cultural customs of deportment, they were enforced by civil power whenever the Rabbis could do so." "They prosecuted offenders before tribunals and sentenced them to pecuniary fines and excommunication." The guilty one was fined a pound of gold which was given to the Rabbis.

Christ enjoined Peter to forgive until seventy times seven but here is a case where a Rabbi was to be punished if he dared to forgive an offender. "If the disciple of a wise man

(Rabbi) be despised, or reviled by any man publicly, it is unlawful for him to forgive any affront to his honor, and if he forgive, he is to be punished, for this is a contempt of law. He is, on the contrary, to avenge and keep the thing in mind, like a serpent, until the offender entreat to be forgiven" (Ibid c. VII. 13). The object of this was to uphold the dignity and power of the Rabbis and make it impossible for the people to shake off their yoke.

"The curse of a Rabbi comes to pass even when it is without cause" (Ibid fol. 20R).

"Whenever the Rabbis fix their eyes upon anyone in displeasure, death or poverty is sure to result" (Tal. Miscely, p. 184, No. 93).

The Pharisees' attitude was, "Stand by and do not come near me for I am holier than thou" (Gemara, Sabbath).

"If a Talmud khakham indulges in anger, revenge, like a serpent, put him on thy loins, i.e., associate with him even if he be so wicked: but if an Amhaaretz (peasant) is a merciful or a godly man, dwell not even in his neighborhood." Here caste is plainly placed superior to virtue.

The tactics of the Rabbis in their traditions is what Jesus called the wisdom of the sons of this world. They first issued comments on the universally accepted Law of God. Then they added auxiliary comments. Then they substituted these in place of the Bible in their teaching. They gave their teachings authority by linking them to Moses. Later they put on pressure by threats. By this time the traditions which were written, became so numerous and technically exacting that the people could not learn them all or remember them, which placed them helplessly under the power of the Rabbis. Thus the people had to constantly resort to the Rabbis and scribes for instruction because they made it their business to study Traditions. In this way the Rabbis made themselves more indispensable than the priests.

The unyielding character of the Rabbis is seen in the following incident from Ibid fol. 96B. Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yossi once so disputed in the synagogue in Tiberias as to whether a wooden door bolt could be used on Sabbath as a pestle, that in anger they tore the scroll of the law in halves.

We have already learned that the Rabbis had usurped the God-given authority of the priests but let us see to what extent they carried it. There was a regular profession of "Instructors of the priests." The "learned" priests formed a close brotherhood called Haberim, or "companions," pledged to observe the prescriptions of the Rabbis with utmost strictness. All priests and others who were not members were despised as Amhaaretz or "rude peasants." The High Priest took seven days' instruction just before the day of Atonement and the Rabbis watched to see that he did not use any forms of the Sadducees.

The Pharisees thought they were doing a very clever thing when they pushed the divinely-appointed priests aside and captured the place of authority for themselves but, alas, they left the Hebrew people the world over without a priest or a sacrifice and as sheep without a shepherd.

(6) BEWARE OF THE SCRIBES

When Jesus said to His disciples, "Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes," it was not so much their "long robes" He was thinking about as it was their "desire" (Luke 20:46). It was their love of show. I have often watched the dignified patriarchal Jewish leaders, dressed in their beautiful long gowns, solemnly passing to and from the Jerusalem Synagogues. They present a very striking appearance. Thus the Rabbis posed for effect, and Jesus said to His disciples, "Beware."

(7) THE BROAD PHYLACTERIES

Another rebuke Jesus administered concerning the attire of the Pharisees is found in Matthew 23:5,—"They make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments." "They affected to have their phylacteries broader than the other Jews wore, as a badge of distinction," of "exclusiveness." It was not a simple badge fastened to their clothing as an insignia of office, such as the police or the Red Cross nurses wear. It was the enlarging of the religious badge to indicate that they possessed more piety than others. Jesus well knew that all this exterior display was an infallible re-

flection of the heart within and He faithfully warned His disciples against yielding to its subtle deception.

(8) THEIR METHODS OF PRAYER

Jesus' criticisms of the Pharisees' methods of prayer were the result of careful observation. He knew what prayer was, to whom it must be offered and the conditions necessary for an answer. When He heard the Pharisee praying "thus with himself," He knew he had missed the goal and that it would be utterly empty of results. Faithfully, Jesus told the audience of the error and of the kind of prayer that succeeds but the Pharisees did not wish to learn.

The corrections which Jesus made in the methods of prayer in His day were exceedingly important. In Matthew 6: 5-7, His first criticism was that "they loved to pray standing in the synagogue and in the corners of the streets that they may be seen of men." It was the custom of zealous Pharisees to happen at these places just at the hour of prayer, wearing their broad phylacteries and long robes and with solemn mien and moving lips go through a prescribed form of prayer. Some were known to remain as long as three hours in the street in this prayerful attitude. They were seeking to be seen of men and Jesus said, "They have their reward," i.e., that was all that they ever received. Their motives were the same as possess the "fakirs" of India today. The one who remains longest at prayer seems most pious.

Another thing that received Christ's censure was "vain repetitions." The Pharisees were guilty of this to a surprising degree and it must have stung them deeply when Jesus added the words, "as the heathen do," for they considered themselves leagues above the heathen in religious attainments.

"Fixed rules for correct prayer were taught with fixed hours and prescribed forms. Superstitious power was ascribed to the mere words. The householder was to repeat the Sch'ma in his house each evening to drive away evil spirits. To say it in bed was like grasping a two-edged sword to slay the assaulting demons." "Every Israelite should try to say one hundred benedictions each day."

So jealous were the Pharisees of being considered foremost in piety and zeal that a general rivalry existed among them.

During the synagogue service some who thought to appear unusually earnest and absorbed in religious fervor would not join in the public prayer but would say a prayer of their own so loudly that others could hear it.

The proper attitude in prayer was a matter of great importance among the Pharisees. In the beginning prayer (the eighteen benedictions), one must bend both head and body that the whole vertebrae be moved. All the Jews of the world had the habit of swaying the body backward and forward at devotions, based on Psalm 35:10, "All my bones shall say, my Lord, who is like unto thee." The nervous oriental Jew likes to speak with his whole body, both to God and to man. The visitor at the "wailing wall" in Jerusalem sees this carried out daily, but especially on Friday, when large numbers of devout Jews come there to pray for the peace of Jerusalem and to weep before the huge stones which eloquently speak to them of their once glorious temple.

Through the Talmud, prayer has been turned into an exercise for gaining merit. A part of one's time is to be spent in praying souls out of purgatory. On festival days, both the chanter and the people are busy in this work of mercy. The chanter is paid for each prayer. Wealthy people maintain several chanters during life and provide for them after death. It is said that even now Jewish men in Jerusalem are supported by wealthy Jews abroad and that they return the benefaction by saying prayers. In Poland and Russia this same practice of trying to pray souls out of purgatory has been much in vogue. Sometimes a soul is said to escape in the guise of a black dog and takes refuge in one of the synagogues from whence the guards of purgatory are not allowed to remove it.

(9) THEY CHOSE CHIEF SEATS

Outside of the Temple, the synagogue was the chief center of Jewish life. It was there that the congregation worshiped and listened to their great Rabbis expound the law. To these men, the nation looked for teaching and spiritual guidance.

"On entering the synagogue there were seats on one side for men. On the other side, or in a gallery, there was a latticed section for women who were shrouded with long veils.

At one end was the tebha or ark of painted wood which contained the sacred Scriptures and in front of it was the 'bima' or elevated seat for the reader. In the chief seats sat the ten or more 'batlanim,' men of leisure, or leading elders, including the ruler of the synagogue." This power of position became a snare to the grasping Pharisees and brought forth Christ's remark, "Beware of the scribes, which love . . . the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at the feasts."

When a scribe had secured one of these "chief seats" of honor, the attitude of the whole congregation became changed toward him. Homage was paid to him, and the number of his "friends" greatly increased. He took the place of honor at family rejoicings that he might discourse upon the law, and his advice was increasingly sought in matters of ceremonial importance. For an unrighteous scribe, it was a rare opportunity for self-seeking and graft.

"The uppermost rooms at feasts" naturally went to those who occupied the "chief seats in the synagogue." Each householder considered it a great favor to be honored by the presence of one of those distinguished Rabbis, whenever he prepared a feast for his friends. It added to his standing in the community.

Divans were couch-tables, on three sides of a square, well cushioned. Guests lay on the left arm with their heads to the center. Their chief place of honor was at the upper end on the right side which had no one above it. Jesus marked how the Rabbi guests sought the uppermost rooms. When a scribe secured this "chief place" a whole train of covetable honors followed. For this reason many young Rabbis set their caps to secure this position but Jesus directed the thoughts of His disciples toward other honors.

(10) LOVE OF SALUTATIONS

Another custom which greatly ministered to the pride of the Rabbis was the "salutations in the marketplaces." Jesus classed this with the desire for "chief seats in the synagogue." The salutation was not simply a greeting, such as the "salaam" used today. It was a deferential greeting, one of which was calculated to indicate the superiority of the recipient and to

show him public honor. "They love salutations in the market places" (Mark 13:38).

This honor was increased in various ways according to the inclination of the admirer. He sometimes took the hand of the Rabbi and impressed a fervent kiss upon it, at the same time uttering profuse expressions of admiration. If the Rabbi had done him any great favor, or if he wished to secure a favor, he sometimes fell on his knees, as some did before Christ, and gratefully acknowledged his indebtedness.

To receive such salutations in public places was much relished by the honor-seeking Rabbis for it greatly increased their prestige in the public mind and secured for them a higher standing and increased patronage.

Jesus refers to this custom when He reveals Simon's heart in his unpardonable neglect of the common courtesy in welcoming guests. Jesus said, "Thou gavest me no kiss." Such neglect would be quickly noticed by those present who would interpret it as expressing Simon's estimate of Christ's standing among Jews.

(11) GIVING ALMS

Another item in the Pharisee's regime of religious works was the giving of alms. This was considered so meritorious that a person need scarcely expect to be saved without its observance. Therefore the man who gave the most alms naturally received the highest rating in the public estimation. This led to the giving of alms at such places and in such ways as would attract attention. Here again Jesus tried to correct the error and give a method which is pleasing unto God. Said He in Matthew 6:1-4, "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have the glory of men. Verily, I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly."

This reminds me of seeing a would-be philanthropist in

North India giving out loaves of bread to the people to gain merit before the gods. The conduct of one beggar who tried to get more than one loaf caused the merit maker to seriously lose his temper and pile up demerit as he attempted to give the beggar a beating. He was a Hindu Pharisee, a brother, in every respect in conduct, to those in Christ's time.

The scribes used the word "alms" as synonymous with "righteousness."

"For one farthing given to the poor, a man will receive heaven."

"A man's table now expiates by alms, as the altar heretofore did by sacrifice."

"He who gives alms will be kept from evil."

"The names of large givers to the poor were called out in the synagogue."

The oral law says, "If a man's merits exceed his sins, he is righteous." This accounts for Israel abounding in alms giving between New Year's day and the day of Atonement. They hope thus to lay up "merit."

This practice was urged on the worshipers by such mandatory teaching as this: "Whosoever would be pious, must fulfil the dicta of the Fathers."

(12) FASTING

Fasting was another meritorious exercise which had been surrounded with so many showy formalities and public exhibitions of piety that its spiritual sequence was lost in ostentatious vanity. Here again Jesus uncovers a serious pitfall and teaches true fasting. "Moreover when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly" (Matt. 6: 16-18).

Fasting was enjoined in the Old Testament but it was fasting unto God and not unto men. It was looking up to God with a clean face and an honest heart instead of with

a face covered with oil and ashes and a heart full of pretentions. Vain glorious fasters advertised their devotion by not washing, bathing, anointing or shaving their heads. They wore no sandals and threw ashes on their heads as a symbol of humility. "Rabbi Joshua fasted so much that his face grew a dirty black."

But superficial piety, whether among Jewish Rabbis, Hindu fakirs, Buddhist priests, Catholics or Protestants, is always a veneer of some sort and is sooner or later detected by discerning people.

In Palestine there was so much sham exhibited among the Pharisees in their acts of fasting and devotion that the people seem to have classified them according to their exaggerations and given them names accordingly. The following were some of the most common.

1. "Heavy footed." Those who were so exhausted by fasting that they could not walk like other people.
2. The "Bleeding" were those who ran their heads against things, because they always walked with their eyes cast down.
3. The "Mortar Pharisees" were those who bent themselves till they resembled the handle of a mortar as they walked.
4. The "Hump-backed" were those who always hung the head.
5. The "Do alls" were those who were ever on the watch that they might fulfil some law.
6. The "Painted" were those whose manners could be seen from a distance.

(13) WASHING

Another observance of Jesus regarding the Pharisees was concerning their ceremonial washing. It was not washing for cleanliness to which He referred, but washing according to their religious formula for merit. This is clearly indicated in His accusation that they washed the outside of the cup in order that they could handle it without being ceremonially defiled, while the inside was full of all uncleanness. It was unfit for use from the sanitary standpoint. Was Jesus not right? Read Matt. 23:25.

Let us examine some of the restrictions of their traditions and see how burdensome they must have been.

Water jars containing water for purifying were common in well-to-do pious homes (John 2:6). They had to be protected from defilement, and the water dipped out with a ladle which must hold the amount of one and one-half egg shells. The hands must be uncovered, that is they must have no gravel, mortar, etc., on them.

Dishes to be washed could not be plunged into the water, as it would render it all ceremonially unclean.

"All dishes, whether hollow or flat, of whatever material, knives, tables, couches, were constantly subjected to purification, lest they should have contracted any Levitical defilement by being used by someone unclean." They demanded that all the vessels of the Temple should be purified after each feast. Even the golden candlestick had to be washed, which brought a pun from a Sadducee who said that before long he expected the Pharisees would give the sun a washing.

The ceremony of washing the hands brought forth more severe laws and penalties than perhaps any other in their ritual "Everyone who washes the hands must attend to four things:

1. "To the water, that it be not unlawful for the washing of hands;
2. "To the measure, that there be a quartern for the two hands;
3. "To the vessel, that the water, wherewith the washing is performed, be in the vessel;
4. "To the washer, that the water come with force from him that pours" (Hilcoth Berachoth).

The water must not have done any work. Then follows a long list of what "work" meant.

Next are directions as to how far the washing is to reach. Also the position of the hands, whether held up or down, and the drying of the hands.

Twenty-six different prayers accompanied these washings.

Each hand was rubbed with the other hand, with the fist closed.

"A man must be very careful in pouring water on his hands three times, for an evil spirit rests upon the hands before washing, and does not depart until water be poured on them three times. Therefore it is necessary, before washing,

to abstain from touching the hand to the mouth, nose, ear, eyes, or one hand to the other before the morning rite, as it would incur the risk of disease in the part touched."

"Washing must be done after cutting the nails or killing a flea."

"He who eats bread without having first washed his hands, commits as it were fornication" (Soteh, fol. 4B).

Rabbi Akiba was thrown into prison and a brother Rabbi brought him water to drink and with which to wash. One day the jailer spilled half. Akiba said, "Give me water for my hands." "But," said his brother Rabbi, "you have not enough for drinking." Akiba replied, "He who eats with unwashed hands commits a crime that ought to be punished with death. Better for me to die of thirst than to transgress the traditions of my ancestors."

If a man went down along the street he must wash on his return for he might have touched a Gentile, or a Jew who was ceremonially unclean.

Rabbi Eleazar ben Hazar was excommunicated because he undervalued the washing of hands. He died unreconciled and was carried to the grave with a stone upon his coffin for in this way the Sanhedrin officially stoned an excommunicated person who had not been reconciled.

There was a special devil (Shibta) who was said to torment those who ate with unwashed hands.

The water could be put into any vessel, even a vessel of dung, but one must not pour the water on hands out of the broken sides of vessels, bottom of a tub, or bung of a cask.

"If one poured water on his hand with one gush his hand is clean."

"If one poured out his first ablution, and find on his hand a splinter or small stone, his hands are unclean, as the second water only purifies the first washing on the hand."

"If one poured the first and second (ablutions) above the wrist, and the water ran back into the hand it is unclean."

"If one poured water on one hand and then rubbed it against its fellow it is unclean. If he rubbed it against his head or the wall it is clean."

"The hands become legally clean, or unclean, up to the wrists."

(14) SWEARING FALSELY

The Rabbinical practice of evading the Law of God was naturally followed by the practice of evading their own word of promise. An oath had always been considered a very sacred thing in Israel but the Rabbis, by their traditions, had made its retraction a common occurrence, for if a man swore an oath and found he had changed his mind he could refuse to fulfil his promise. The Traditions teach, "If a man swear a rash oath, and afterwards repent of it, because he sees that if he keep this oath it will cause him grief, and therefore he changes his mind; or if something should occur to him which was not in his mind at the time when he swore, and he repent on that account; behold, a person in such circumstances, is to ask one wise man (Rabbi) or three common men in any place where there is not a wise man, and they absolve him from his oath; and then it will be lawful to do a thing he had sworn not to do, or to leave undone a thing which he had sworn to do."

Contrast this evasion with the command of God in Numbers 30:2, "If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth." The Rabbis confess that this law was given to Moses by God. They also declare that their Tradition came from God to Moses yet their tradition flatly contradicts God's law. Which is right?

The traveler in Palestine today is shocked by the frequency with which the native people resort to solemn oaths to give the impression that they are telling the truth. Whenever a statement of anyone is questioned he flies to his refuge of the oath and declares, "By Allah," or "By my head," or some other expression. It was against this very practice that Jesus directed some of His most emphatic teaching. Said He, "Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

The practice of swearing was one of the evils which had to be rebuked in the early church. James speaks in a tell-tale, entreating way when he pleads, "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, nor by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation." This habit of superficial oath-taking is common the world over. Among English speaking people we hear such expressions as these, used by thoughtless people, "I hope to die if it is not so." The German people rush to the words, "Gott" and "Himmel" to prove their statements.

(15) DIVORCE

The schools of Hillel and Shammai were constantly quarreling over the question of divorce and on several occasions tried to draw Christ into the controversy. The school of Shammai adhered to one cause for granting a divorce, namely, adultery, while the school of Hillel permitted it "for any cause." The latter school taught, "If the wife cook the husband's food ill, by over salting or over roasting it she is to be put away." Rabbi Akiba (a Hillite) said, "If a man sees a woman handsomer than his own wife, he may put his wife away."

"A man must not marry a woman with the intention of divorcing her; but, if he previously inform her that he is going to marry her for a season, it is lawful" (Hilchoth Sittin in Even Halzer, 1).

Jesus analyzed the whole problem by analyzing the Pharisees. Said He, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so."

In this connection a glimpse at the attitude of the Pharisees toward women may be in place.

"Women, slaves and children are exempt from the study of the law."

"No man should teach his daughter the law, for the reason that the majority of women have not got a mind fitted for study, but pervert the words of the law on account of the poverty of their minds."

"A woman has no other claim upon wisdom than the distaff."

Everyone that teacheth his daughter the law (referring to the oral law) is considered as if he taught her transgression.

The Talmudists have even said, "The voice of a female is an offense." Her degradation is constantly sounded in her ears. The Talmud directs the male sex to offer a prayer every morning to bless God for not having been born a female.

"He who follows the advice of his wife will fall into hell for it was said, 'There was none like unto Ahab, whom Jezebel his wife misguided'" (Bava Metzia, fol. 59A).

"Let an Israelite not marry the daughter of the unlearned for they are an abomination, and their wives vermin."

Suppose the United States should pass a law regarding Jews and Jewish women such as the Jews have passed about their own flesh and blood, would they not bitterly resent it and call it unmerciful?

(16) THE PHARISEES' CONVERTS

The dire effects of Pharisaism was never more graphically revealed than it was when Jesus disclosed the desperate persistence of the Rabbis to make converts and the extent to which they afterward drove them by their false teaching. Said He, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."

The iron grip of the Pharisees is seen even on Christ's disciples. Not until Pentecost, were the shackles broken and their tongues loosed. Away up in Capernaum in the last year of Christ's ministry we see them still living under the haunting fear of getting the ill will of this tenacious sect. Jesus had spoken on the subject of defilement and it created some adverse comment which the disciples overheard. They came to Jesus and said, "Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard that saying?" They perhaps thought that Jesus would offer an apology or restate His teaching in order to preserve the Pharisees' good will but the apology never came. The disciples never really understood the Pharisees until after Pentecost.

The Pharisees' grip of terror is again seen in John 12:42: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue."

(17) ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHERS—AMHAARETZ

Two striking words which Jesus once used concerning the Pharisees give a perfect description of their attitude toward the rest of the world. He said that they "despised others" (Luke 18:9).

The Pharisees numbered about six thousand at the time of Christ while the population of the land was several million. There were numerous other factions and cults but the Pharisees cordially despised them all. Their name means "separatists," and they rigidly adhered to its significance. They had set themselves upon a high pedestal of exclusiveness in religious propaganda and jurisdiction and anyone who would not bow to their dictation was looked down upon religiously.

The publicans were always bitterly denounced. Curses upon them seems to have been ever on the Pharisees' lips and no occasion was inappropriate for pronouncing them. Even in prayer, the Pharisee belittlingly said, "Even as this publican." They had gone so far as to nickname Jesus, "A friend of publicans and sinners." All this bitterness is sanctioned in the Talmud. One proverb reads, "Bears and lions might be the fiercest wild beasts of the forests, but publicans and informers were the worst in the cities."

The common meaning of the name Amhaaretz was, "an unlearned man." This does not mean that they were law breakers or otherwise irreligious. They were the "common people," the "submerged tenth" of their day. The Pharisees, to exalt themselves, exalted learning and that pushed the others down. Then they made laws to keep them down as the following will show—"Our Rabbis have handed down as a tradition, that six things are said with respect to Amharatzin. Testimony is not to be given to them, nor received from them. A secret is not to be revealed to them. They are not to be appointed as guardians to orphans, nor to an alms-fund. One is not to bear them company in any way. And some say,

that if they have lost anything and it is found, no public notice is to be given respecting it" (Pesachim, Vol. 49, Col. 2).

R. Isaac taught that even if they saw an Amhaaretz drop something, they need not return it to him. The common custom concerning "lost and found" articles was to make an announcement about them in the synagogue, but it was not necessary if the property was undoubtedly that of one of the Amhaaretz.

A vivid picture of the effectual working of the Pharisees' law against the Amhaaretz is found in John 7: 45-49. The Pharisees had sent officers to bring Jesus before their Tribunal but the officers returned without Him and gave as their excuse, "Never man spake like this man," which meant that the officers had been convinced that Jesus was the Christ. This made the Pharisees furious and they answered, "Are ye also deceived?" Then they betray their classification of the people. The first class is seen in the remark, "Have any of the rulers or Pharisees believed on him?" The second class—the unlearned—was defined, "But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed." They were the Amhaaretz.

What awful bitterness of heart it must have required to write the following and to have placed it in the sacred Talmud about their own brethren in the flesh. Rabbi Eliezer says, "It is lawful to split open the nostrils of an Amhaaretz, even on the Day of Atonement." Rabbi Samuel says, "It is lawful to tear asunder an Amhaaretz like a fish, and to begin from his back." Rabbi Eliezer says, "If an Amhaaretz is a merciful or a godly man, dwell not even in his neighborhood."

"A learned man, though he be illegitimate, goes before a High Priest, who is an Amhaaretz."

(18) THE SAMARITANS

The Samaritans were another people who came under the ban of the Rabbis. Of course, this was not only religious but national as is seen in the well-worn phrase, "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."

They were of mixed race, partly Assyrian, and they fully resented the attitudes of the Jews toward them. About one hundred forty of them are still living in Ancient Shechem.

When the final Jewish anathema against the Samaritans was

issued, the two nations separated and have been bitter enemies unto this day. The anathema was stated thus, "Let no Israelite eat of one morsel of anything that is a Samaritan's; let no Samaritan become a proselyte, and allow them not to have part in the resurrection of the dead."

"Every legal paper which is subscribed to by Samaritan witnesses is rejected, except papers of divorce and emancipation" (Mishna).

"Rabbi Eliezer used to say, 'He who eats of a morsel of the Samaritans is like one who eats swine's flesh.' "

Jesus boldly denounced this racial hatred. He told the story of the Good Samaritan, in the stronghold of the Jews and on two occasions at least spent some time among the Samaritans themselves, teaching them.

(19) THE GENTILES

In spite of the teaching of the Old Testament concerning the fair treatment to be accorded to Gentiles, the Pharisees were exceedingly bitter.

"A Gentile who employs himself in the law is guilty of death. He is not to employ himself except in the seven commandments that belong to Gentiles. And thus a Gentile who keeps a Sabbath though it be one of the week days—if he make it to himself as a Sabbath, he is guilty of death."

"He that sweareth to a Gentile must pay the principal but is not bound to add the fifth part."

"Anything that a Gentile has lost is lawful. He that restores it transgresses, for he strengthens the hands of the world."

"A daughter of Israel shall not suckle the son of a heathen woman because that would be bringing up a son for idolatry."

After reading of the sworn hatred of the Jews toward other races it seems impossible to avoid the conviction that the present tribulation which the Jews suffer is but the return of their folly upon their own heads.

When the Jews were driven out of Spain they sought refuge in Portugal. The Portuguese refused them permanent residence, but allowed them to come providing they would pay a certain amount of gold and if they were found in Portugal after a certain date they must either be baptized or sold for

slaves. This was the attitude of the Talmud toward the Gentiles reversed, for Haleoth Melachin C. VIII 4 declares, "And thus Moses, our master, has commanded us, by Divine tradition to compel all that come into the world to take upon themselves the commandments imposed upon the sons of Noah and whosoever will not receive them is to be put to death."

(20) WHITED SEPULCHRES

When Jesus said to the Pharisees "Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness," He painted a vivid picture, illustrations of which may still be seen in Palestine. Every spring it is the custom to whitewash the graves, which gives them a very clean and attractive appearance. Then as the season advances and the fall rains come on, the whitewash entirely disappears, giving the whole scene a dismal, forbidding look.

Ofttimes it is difficult to tell just where the graves are. Once while walking through an old burial ground, I was cautioned not to step on any of the graves as the people were superstitious about it, but guard as best I could, I was seldom sure that I was not breaking their law. Jesus drew a lesson from this condition also. Said He, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them" (Luke 11:44).

This was a terrific comparison. It plainly taught that Jesus considered the Pharisees a dangerous element in Jewish life. They were "whited sepulchres," attractive on the one hand, and "graves which appear not," on the other hand, but the inner contents were always the same.

The people had a mortal fear of graves. Superstitions haunted the cemeteries and made the burial places the abodes of ghosts and ghouls. Purifications, after coming in contact with a corpse or a grave, were so minute that it required an elaborate ceremonial to overcome its defiling effects. When Christ stamped this sepulchral character upon the Pharisees it ought to have made the Jews take instant warning, but they possessed too little spiritual discernment.

(21) FALSE PHYSICIANS

Only once do the Gospels refer to the ministrations of physicians but the statement is a commentary in a nut shell regarding the effect of their practices. It was written concerning the woman who touched the hem of Christ's garment and says she had "suffered many things of many physicians." A few of their prescriptions will make the reason for the statement clear.

"For bleeding at the nose, let a man be brought who is a priest, and whose name is Levi and let him write the word Levi backward." "Or let him look out for a small stream of water that flows from east to west, and let him go and stand with one leg on each side of it, and let him take with his right hand some mud from under his left foot, and with his left hand from under his right foot. Let him twist two threads of wool, and dip them in the mud and put them in his nostrils" (Gittin, fol. 69, Col. 1).

If a mad dog scratched any one the remedy was, "Let the man cast off his clothes and run away."

(22) HYPOCRITES

Five words contain the basis of the reason which Jesus gave the people for not following the Pharisees, namely, "They say, and do not." Then follows His itemized proofs which crystallized this failure into one word, "hypocrite."

They shut heaven, devoured widows' houses, made their proselytes children of hell, swore falsely, omitted judgment, mercy and truth from their teaching, talked piously while their hearts were unclean and continued the conduct of their fathers who killed the prophets.

In order that they might hide all this from the people, Jesus said they made long prayers, tithed even the mint and anise and cumnin, made broad their phylacteries, gave alms to impress people with their generosity, sought to be called Rabbi, Rabbi, boasted that if they had lived when their fathers did they would never have committed their sins and then kept up a fine outward appearance which deceived their followers.

With such an array of charges, is it any wonder that Jesus

closed His address saying, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

Contrast these mercenary despotic motives with the unselfish motive of Jesus, "I am among you as he that serveth," which was a fulfillment of the prophecy, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

(23) A DEN OF THIEVES

In only one case did Jesus use drastic measures in protesting against the practices of the Jewish leaders and that was on the occasion when He cleansed the Temple. Conditions must have been very bad to cause Jesus to call His Father's house of worship a den of thieves because of the use they made of it. Luke 19:46—"My house is a house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves."

Temple traffic was licensed by the Jewish authorities. Those engaged in it paid a heavy tax which went into the pockets of the chief members of the hierarchy, especially to Annas and to Caiaphas, his son-in-law. Indeed, these men engaged in traffic themselves for there were bazaars styled the "bazaars of the sons of Annas" who had dove-cotes on the mount of Olives from which they sold doves to the temple worshipers. These priests controlled the situation for when a man brought his own offering it was easy for the priest in charge to pronounce the animal unfit and compel him to purchase another. It was easy to let the impression get abroad that, "If you only buy your sacrifice of one of the priests you will have no trouble." Thus the priest could "pass" anything he had on hand.

"Shops for wine, oil and salt were found. Potters sold pilgrims clay dishes and ovens for the Passover lamb. Pens for sheep and cattle were permitted in the Gentile court. Owners shouted their business and praised the quality and cheapness of their products in jangling voices and money changers added to the hideous din. The noise of animals and the bartering of buyers and sellers not only created pande-

monium in the Gentile section but also disturbed the temple service. To pass through such a bedlam on one's way to worship would chill the devotion of the most devout soul.

Christ rose against it. He had no human authority over the place as He was neither a priest, a Pharisee nor a political attache. Jerome says, concerning Christ's cleansing the Temple, "That one man could do so amazing an act may have been due to the starry light which shone from His eyes and to the Divine majesty which beamed from His features. The weakness of the guilty made them go out as the men did who left the woman in the midst.

(24) YE ARE OF YOUR FATHER THE DEVIL

Perhaps the most stunning charge that Jesus ever brought against the Pharisees is found in John 8:44, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him." It does not seem possible that these outwardly pious, devout, praying, alms giving, church goers could at the same time be full of lust and murder, and actually carrying out the will and work of the devil. No wonder God said, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?" If we watch them and their work as the ministry of Christ draws to a close we shall see their wolf nature emerging more and more from under the sheep's clothing until at last it springs from cover and strikes the blow of the murderer.

(25) YE SHUT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

What a shock this charge must have caused. The Pharisees claimed to be the constituted authority on this very point. They wrote the doctrinal beliefs, formulated the ceremonials and dictated rules of daily life. Christ's words fell like a charge of dynamite. "Woe unto you, scribes, and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Matt. 23:13).

The Pharisees, who sat in Moses' seat, posed as keepers of the gate of the kingdom and arbitrarily dictated who should go in and who should stay out. Jesus took the keys from

them and gave them to Peter, telling the Jews that their house was left to them desolate.

The Pharisees kept people from the kingdom in various ways. When Jesus came saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17), and later opened the door to the man sick with the palsy, saying, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee," they at once said: "Why does this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?" When Blind Bartimaeus cried out to Jesus for mercy in a street of Jericho, the Jewish throng tried to silence him and deprive him of sight and salvation. When the blind man of John nine was healed and testified before the official council of Rabbis in the Jerusalem synagogue, "they thrust him out," which meant that they excommunicated him.

If you wish to know what this meant to the poor man who had been blind all his life just read the following Rabbinical law. "It is unlawful for an excommunicated person, as for a mourner, to trim his beard or hair, or to wash all the days of his excommunication; neither is he to be associated in pronouncing the benedictions: neither is he to be reckoned as one of the ten, whenever ten persons are required; neither may anyone sit within four ells of him. If he die in his excommunication, the tribunal send and lay a stone upon his coffin to signify that they stone him because he is separated from the congregation. And it is unnecessary to say that he is not to be mourned for, and that his funeral is not to be attended" (Hilcoth Talmud Torah, Ibid).

This power to excommunicate offenders lay in the hands of every Rabbi. "And in like manner the wise man (Rabbi) himself may, on account of his honor, excommunicate an unlearned man who has treated him with contumely, and there is no need of witness nor admonition. And the excommunicated man is not to be absolved until he appease the wise man." Thus they could shut him out from divine rights for mere personal offenses.

"Whosoever despises the wise men (Rabbis) has no share in the world to come." Is it any wonder that Jesus opposed such teaching?

Even though there were many thousands of scribes, Rabbis

and Pharisees in the land, yet the whole nation was blind and as sheep without a shepherd.

Christ's most severe charge was that they not only refused to enter the kingdom of heaven themselves but that they deliberately stood in the doorway and purposely refused to let others enter.

(26) WOE UNTO YOU

Christ never pronounced a "woe" until every means had been exhausted to prevent its being necessary. But after studying the foregoing pages and seeing the deliberately planned schemes of the Pharisees to force upon the nation a galling yoke of ceremonial slavery, it is no wonder that Christ said, "Woe unto you." He had seen them "devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers"; He had heard them swear by the gold of the Temple to confirm their truthfulness when it meant nothing; He had seen them "pay tithes of mint, anise and cummin" while they rode rough shod over "judgment, mercy and faith"; He had watched them strain out the gnat in some ceremonial technicality while they swallowed, or winked at some sin the size of a camel in comparison; He had seen them wash the outside of the cup with the formal "pourings" while the inside grew thick with the unhealthful accumulations of neglect. On and on Christ forged through their hypocritical practices, tearing off their masks and exposing their true character until at last He pronounced the verdict, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Thus Christ's most terrific words of denunciation were spoken to men who were outwardly the most religious men of His time.

CHAPTER II

THE PHARISEES' CHARGES AGAINST CHRIST

THE Pharisees came against Christ like an onrushing army. Their charges were vehement and bitter. Usually a single reply from Christ drove them back until they could rally with some new accusation. Honest seekers after truth are always quiet and receptive but the Pharisees were never so in policy or in practice as the following quotation will show. "The Rabbis denounced quietness and composure on religious subjects as an evidence of indifference. Warmth and bitterness were assumed in order to prove their zeal for the law. Wrangling was common." What a contrast to this statement regarding Jesus' manner, "He shall not strive nor cry neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets."

Now as we take up their charges against Jesus we shall see the Pharisees deport themselves very differently. The more complete discussion of their manner of conduct will be considered in the next chapter.

(1) HE IS FROM GALILEE

"Search and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." This was the reply which Nicodemus received from his brother Pharisees one day in the Council meeting when he undertook to obtain a fair hearing for Jesus.

Educated Jerusalem always had a pick at Galilee. It felt, concerning the semi-foreign northland, as Boston once may have felt regarding the wild uncultured West. The region was so strewn with a non-Jewish population that they named it "Galilee of the Gentiles." The speech of the people was

so tainted with a foreign accent that it could be easily detected, just as they caught Peter when they said, "Thy speech betrayeth thee," and as the multitude detected the difference at Pentecost and asked, "Are not all these which speak Galileans?'

In the Talmud, the Galileans are represented as poor, sparing their wine and milk, mixing their eye paint with water and thinking that even a wick end was worth saving. This condition was enough to create a prejudice against Jesus in the minds of the Pharisees but it was not all the story. There was something worse. It is heard in the slur, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Public sentiment in Jerusalem answered, "No!"

Nazareth had an unsavory reputation for some reason. It was a small town, off the beaten track of the world, with poor schools and no renowned scholars. Young men from such places in our day get nicknames that they never send home. It is the same the world over.

Yet everyone knows, and always has known, that many great men have often come from small, unpretentious places. Abraham Lincoln came from a little place in Kentucky but most Americans would prefer not to be stopped on the street by a tourist and asked the name of the town, yet the civilized world reveres Lincoln's memory and honors his great work.

To the Pharisees, Jesus could not be better than the town He came from. They heaped upon Him the ill-savor of the place which it had accumulated through the years.

But Jesus never once offered an apology for staying in Nazareth, even after He grew up. He would have had many more advantages in Capernaum or Jerusalem but He chose to stay where He had been placed. It was a part of His life of humility. "He made Himself of no reputation."

(2) THE CARPENTER'S SON

Another remark which carried with it no intended compliment was, "Is not this the Carpenter's son?" The Pharisees believed in work theoretically and grew eloquent over its value but a few glimpses into their inner thoughts shows they were like the rest of the world, they preferred to avoid it when they could.

Straws show which way the wind blows and actions show which way the thoughts flow. When the Rabbis chose a name for those who were to occupy the "chief seats in the synagogue," they took the name "batlanim," meaning "men of leisure." When Jesus chose a name to describe His position He selected the word "Servant." A glimpse into their life history shows each living up to the name he had chosen. In this, as in everything else, their ideals were opposite.

When "men of leisure" think that a carpenter has no right to take public part in molding religious and civic issues let them recall the lives of such men as D. L. Moody, Spurgeon, Whitefield, Livingstone and a thousand others.

(3) HOW KNOWETH THIS MAN LETTERS?

On one occasion when Jesus came to Jerusalem and was teaching in the Temple during the Feast of Tabernacles the Jews listened with keen interest. Then some one broke in upon the attention of the group around Him and exclaimed, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" We need not be deceived into thinking that this was intended for a compliment because in less than three minutes this same crowd said to His face, "Thou hast a devil."

Learning was adored among the Pharisees. Their schools were well organized and their teaching covered many of the affairs of life. Scholastic training under their tutelage was considered necessary to obtain any reasonable public following. The "free lance" teacher was looked upon as a calamity by the whole sect. He was a dangerous neophyte. It was in this class that they had placed Jesus because His name had never been on their list of students. That is one of the tricks which learning plays on the learned. It is hard to submit to letting God raise up a Moody from a shoe store or a Carey from a cobbler's bench. Rhetorical and grammatical blunders nauseate the scholastic mind while spiritual errors seem to be of but little consequence. For this reason Jesus was a surprise to them. They found He had a most wonderful grasp of spiritual and moral truth for they never asked Him a question that He could not answer offhand.

We would be surprised, too, if we could understand the character of the crucible in which Christ lived. Suppose you

were advocating some great public cause against which there was a strong opposition and which was backed by practically all the educated men of the country. They would look upon you as a novice, an upstart, they would dog your footsteps, bitterly criticizing your work and prejudicing people against you. Every time you spoke they would try to trap you and you would never know what subtle question they would ask you next or just when you might expect a volley of stones or a company of officers to arrest you. Could you keep sweet?

Suppose they demanded your belief concerning the League of Nations, the Federation of Churches, the Government ownership of railroads, the solution of the Social Question, the Race and the Tax problems; you knew that your future depended on the finality of your answers; could you silence your questioners so they would exclaim, "He speaketh with authority." "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?"

(4) BY WHAT AUTHORITY?

When the chief priests and elders came to Jesus and asked, "By what authority doest thou these things?" it looked as though they were making an honest inquiry, but if you look at the last verse of the chapter which closes this incident, you must change your mind. It reads, "But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude which took him for a prophet."

If you do not think that Jesus knew their cunning trickery just read His answers in the graphic replies which He gave in Matthew 21: 23-46. These answers covered their question with remarkable fulness. It was one of His official defenses. The day previous, He had driven the traders from the Temple, an act requiring great authority. Just before that He had made His triumphal entry into the city. This alarmed the Pharisees and, together with the chief priests, they searched Him out and pressed Him to explain His strange conduct. With the simplicity of a child Jesus replied, "I also will ask you one thing and if you answer my question I will answer yours." That was fair. But it was one of the adroit methods of the Oriental in endeavoring to trap his opponent in an argument. The opponent cannot refuse the challenge or else

the crowd will call him a coward, so he must step into the arena, and face what comes.

Jesus' simple question was this, "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" Then the Pharisees held a hurried conference. They saw the trap, for it says they reasoned among themselves saying, "If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet." It was like a game of chess. They were completely checkmated. They could not go either way. So they confessed, "We can't tell. You've got us." Then Jesus replied, "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things."

The second pitfall into which they stepped is seen in the story of a certain man and his two sons. When the father asked them to go and work in the vineyard one replied, "I will not: but afterward he repented and went." The second said, "I go sir and went not." At this point Jesus stopped and let His audience take part. He asked, "Whether of them twain did the will of his father?" Then the chief priests and elders stepped into the net. They could not help it. Any sane man would have had to have said the same as they did, namely, "The first." Then Jesus drew the net full of great fish. Said He, "Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." That was a short parable but it did a great thing. It showed how God classified them in His spiritual circle, much to their surprise for they had placed themselves at the top of His list instead of the bottom.

Christ's next story was about the householder who planted a vineyard and let it out to husbandmen. As time went on these men beat or killed all the accountants which the householder had sent to investigate the estate. The kindhearted husbandman decided to send his son, as his last appeal, thinking they would show him reverence. But these worldly-wise, blind reasoners grew bold. They saw their chance. Authority meant nothing to them. Ownership had no personal rights. They were Bolsheviki. "This is the heir," they cried, "come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance," and they did. Then the owner called a halt. He said he would

miserably destroy those wicked men. He took the stone which the workmen had rejected and, made it the keystone of the arch, to the amazement of all.

After Jesus had told this choice story He did not leave His hearers to make their own application. That was too risky for His hearers were adepts at forgetting that part, so He gave it quickly before the impression could get cold. As one reads it he feels that those Pharisees must have needed something to lean against to help them stand the shock. Said Jesus, as He carefully measured His words, "Therefore, say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." And why not? They received just what they were going to do to the householder, rob him of his property. They had taken the highwayman's risk, and lost. But did the Jewish leaders catch the point? Read verse forty-five: "And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them." In this illustration Jesus shows the Pharisees up in a new role, that of their official capacity and their responsibility to honor the king's son. The next parable is that of the "certain king which made a marriage for his son," and illustrates the same truth.

(5) BROKE THE LAW

The favorite charge of the Pharisees, that Christ was continually breaking the Law, should have been dispelled after He gave the principles of His kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount, because He assured them that the purpose of His coming was to keep the law. Said He, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Then He pronounced a severe judgment on those who broke it and taught others to break it. Why would He break it when He came to keep it and when it would put Him under judgment?

If you should make a promise and then declare that not the dot of an "i" nor the cross of a "t" should fail of all you had pledged, it would seem strange if your own people kept constantly questioning your actions and motives.

(6) DESTROY THE TEMPLE

When Jesus was at the first Passover which occurred after His ministry began, He uttered a prophecy which the Jews quickly distorted and which they brought up at the end to secure His death. Said He, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews misconstrued the prophecy to mean a boastful statement about Herod's Temple which had been building for forty-six years and was not yet completed. The Bible states that "He spake of the temple of his body" (John 2:21). But in Matthew 26:61, we find this false charge seals His doom. At His trial a witness recalled His words, "This fellow said, I am able to destroy this temple of God, and to build it in three days." With this testimony the high priest adjured Jesus to tell them who He was, and then worked himself up into a frenzy of bitterness at Christ's sublime answer. He should have fallen at Christ's feet in sincere worship but in such a frame of mind he could not fulfil the conditions—"in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). When anyone wishes to determine his own spiritual state let him fall before Christ in worship and watch His feelings of devotion, submission and fellowship. He will soon discover his true condition of heart.

(7) BROKE THE SABBATH

We have already considered this charge in a previous chapter. Let us now look at the counter-charge against Christ.

God's law, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," was the law for which they both contended. But when we investigate we find they had two Sabbaths, the one just mentioned in the quotation and the other described in the Tradition of the elders. The Bible Sabbath was to be kept "holy" while the Sabbath of the Traditions was to be kept circumspectly and ceremonially.

When Jesus said, "The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath," He meant the Bible Sabbath. When the Pharisees accused Him of breaking the Sabbath laws they meant the laws they had made concerning its observance.

In Mark 2: 23-28, the disciples pluck the ears of corn and the Pharisees immediately raise their objections. Then Jesus

patiently shows them why their restrictions are not Biblical because David ate the shew bread in the Temple on the Sabbath and was blameless.

In Luke 14: 1-6, Jesus heals a man afflicted with the dropsy in a Pharisee's house on Sabbath and tries to answer their objections by showing that they themselves would give relief to an ox or an ass that had fallen into a pit on the same day.

In John 5: 1-27, Jesus heals the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda on Sabbath which caused a bitter protest. Then Jesus arose above the appeal to law or sympathy and explained with great fulness His divine commission and how these works were given in proof of His being sent of God.

In Luke 13: 10-17, Jesus healed an infirm woman in the Synagogue on Sabbath. The ruler became indignant and protested against people coming on Sabbath to be healed, when there were six days for such work. In this case, Jesus showed them their littleness. Said He, "Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo these eighteen years, be loose from this bond on the Sabbath day? And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him."

How pure and true were all of Jesus' motives! He was keeping the Sabbath "holy." Now please read chapter I, section 4, and see how much holiness there was in the cunning tricks which the Rabbis practiced in order to evade keeping the Sabbath which they had made for themselves in their own Traditions. The contrast will settle certain things in your mind forever.

(8) MADE HIMSELF GOD

When the Pharisees learned from Christ's words and work that He declared Himself to be God they learned just what God the Father wanted them to know, for when they got that, His case was before them in the affirmative.

I listened once, for a short time, to a Rationalist who spoke triflingly of Jesus Christ's claim to be the Son of God. It took me back to Jerusalem where I had seen bitter Jews

hiss out their venom of hatred against the Christians of today, and on back in imagination to the Bible scenes when the controversies between the Jews and Jesus waxed warm. We never have such scenes among us and seldom one that even suggests it. The oriental Jew is exceedingly emotional. He will run the whole gamut of his feelings while he is talking to you because they are a necessary part of his speech.

There is no doubt but that certain subjects in their conversation with Christ wrought them up to a very high pitch of excitement. The subject of His Sonship was one of them. They saw that if Jesus was the Son of God their whole theological system was wrong, so they fought it. Their accusation was, "Thou being a man, makest thyself God" (John 10:33). No matter how much proof Jesus offered, they had made up their minds not to believe it.

(9) HE EATETH WITH SINNERS

Throughout the Old Testament, God tried to weld the Israelites together in brotherly unity and harmony but they were constantly introducing various inadhesive influences which kept them apart. That is exactly the work which the Pharisees were doing in Christ's day. There were also six or eight other classes, or cults, with their various subdivisions. The Pharisees desired the distinction of having been first, therefore they must automatically bear the blame of starting the schisms. They had reproduced the caste system of India on a small scale. They themselves occupied the place of the twice-born Brahmans while the lepers and publicans were the outcasts.

When Jesus came and ate with the publicans He sealed His doom, for He could never have any standing among the Pharisees if He ignored caste rules. Zacchaeus was a well-known publican in Jericho, but when Jesus called him from the sycamore tree and offered to go home with him without even first being invited, He broke caste and the Pharisees withdrew saying that, "He was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." They would rather have died than have been compelled to live with Zacchæus, all because he was a publican. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

The Pharisees did not know that some of their sarcastic

utterances about Jesus would ring through the eternal ages as the highest compliments ever paid Him. The sentence that will stir heaven will not be the phrase, "He made the worlds," but, "He eateth with sinners." He spake the worlds into existence but He died for sinful men. One excites your interest while the latter compels your love and devotion. Zacchæus took Jesus in to dine at his frugal earthly table, Jesus will return the favor by taking Zacchæus into the marriage supper of the Lamb.

(10) HE FORGIVETH SINNERS

In Luke 5:20, Jesus uttered a sentence which made the ears of the scribes and Pharisees tingle. He said to the man sick of palsy, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Immediately the scribes said, "Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Then Jesus healed the man as a proof He could forgive his sins. "And they were all amazed and glorified God." This was a death blow to Phariseeism for if sin could be forgiven by a word what was the use of all their works for merit, their penance, alms, saying prayers, ceremonial washings and ritualistic performances? However, they never allowed themselves to consider whether or not their method was wrong. Their great concern was about losing the patronage of their followers.

(11) HE HATH BEELZEBUB

The Pharisees had to have an explanation to give to their followers which would reveal the power by which Jesus cast out devils so they hit upon this one, "He hath Beelzebub" (Mark 3:22). It was what we call a "bluff." They hoped it would work so they used it several times to get it in circulation.

Beelzebub was a name given by Jewish wit and contempt to a being to whom they said was assigned the control of diseases and they here declared that Jesus was performing His miracles under Beelzebub's power. What an eternal shock it must have been to these Pharisees when they awoke to the realization that the "pun" they had so glibly spoken con-

cerning Jesus was the "unpardonable sin," the sin against the Holy Ghost. It is the sin which cuts off all hope.

But Jesus patiently answers their charge by showing its impossibility. He asks two questions, "How can Satan cast out Satan?" and, "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?" Jesus asks the same courteous treatment which they gave to their Rabbis whom they declared had cast out devils by the power of God.

Let us examine some of the methods of their famous Rabbis for overcoming demons. A chief means of exorcism was by the use of the root Baara which grew in the lonely valley of Baara, near Machærus. Its root was of a flame red color, and threw out fiery beams at night. If one tried to pull it out, it drew itself back into the ground. If broken off it caused death in case a part remained behind in the earth. Consequently the Baara gatherer fastened a dog to the loosened plant and compelled him by blows to run away and thus uproot the plant. Does that sound like a Bible teaching?

Another prescription was to "Take the embers of perfume and lay upon them some of the heart and liver of a fish and make a smoke with it and the demon shall smell it and flee away and never come anymore."

Josephus said he "saw a man named Eleazar release a demon-possessed man before Vespasian and his sons by putting a ring in the man's nose and drawing the demon out through his nostrils."

"Whosoever wishes to see them (demons) let him take the inner covering of a black cat, the kitten of a first-born black cat which is also the kitten of a first-born black cat, and let him burn it in the fire and powder it and fill his eyes with it and he will see them."

How would the above teaching sound if placed in the Sermon on the Mount or given to the disciples at the last supper?

"The Talmudic doctrine of magic explains why the scribes and Pharisees were so little moved by Christ's miracles. They were in the same state of mind as Pharaoh and his magicians were before Moses. They thought His miracles a mere proof of His magic skill. Even when they confessed that it was the finger of God, their minds did not let loose of their

thoughts of magic because their understanding was darkened."

The Pharisees, who rejected the council of God, did just as people do today who reject God's revelation—they tried to analyze the mystery of Christ through human reason. One of the tangents where their speculation sidetracked seems to have been in the belief in a species of transmigration, for when Christ asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" they replied, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some say Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." They seemed to think they had a perfect right to decide how Christ came. But since their reasoning was very hazy they had to bring in a strong element of uncertainty, so they fell back upon the mystery of human speculation found in the doctrine of reincarnation.

CHAPTER III

THE PHARISEES' METHODS OF ATTACK

THE whole world judges people by their approach. The Pharisees were no exception. Never did they approach Christ in a friendly way or as honest seekers after truth. The only exception to this was Nicodemus, and he was converted.

Their purposes in life were entirely different. The Pharisees taught traditions; Christ taught the Word of God. They made long formal prayers full of vain repetitions; Christ prayed true prayers with direct petitions. They laid burdens on men's shoulders; Christ removed burdens. They sought to be seen of men; Christ sought to be pleasing unto God the Father. They taught salvation from sin by merit; Christ taught that it must be received by grace through faith.

They pretended much in the way of religion but an analysis of their motives and methods betrays an entire absence of divine grace, mercy and truth. Their followers, who studied their teachings for life were further from God in the end than in the beginning. Christ's method was the opposite. Men's lives were suddenly changed, lepers leaped and praised God, Zacchæus promised restoration, the Samaritan woman became a missionary, a Roman Centurion was converted, multitudes were healed. Not one of these things occurred under the ministry of the Phariseees and they knew it. They saw the impassable gulf between themselves and Christ and knew they could never meet on common ground.

(1) THEY MURMURED

In Luke 5:30 it says, "the scribes and Pharisees murmured." That was the subtle method of creating prejudice. If they

could get the people to murmuring gossip against Christ they would have them burning the bridges against retreat. It was the first step toward crying, "Crucify Him."

Israel murmured against God at Kadesh-Barnea and not one of them entered the promised land. They thought that murmuring was an innocent pastime, but God explained it differently, for instead of speaking afterward about the "land flowing with milk and honey" and of their being "gathered unto their fathers," He spake roughly unto them and said, "Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness."

It was over this same road of unbelief that the Pharisees were leading the nation in Christ's day.

(2) THEY WATCHED HIM

In Luke 6:7 the record gives another menacing attitude, in the words, "And the scribes and Pharisees watched him." This was not the loving gaze of those who wished to see God's mercy shown to suffering human bodies but the stealthy watch of murderers, for verse eleven says, "And they were filled with madness." They watched Him as a tiger watches its prey, only to devour.

(3) THEY USED DECEPTION

This subtle attitude of the Pharisees again showed its duplicity at the last Passover in Jerusalem. The Feast was on. Crowds were coming. Expectation was running high. The multitude was asking the question, "What think ye, that he will come to the feast?"

The Pharisees saw their cause hanging in the balance and they played the same roll that Herod played when he craftily asked the Magi to tell him if they found the child king so that he might come and worship Him. The chief priests and Pharisees asked that if any one saw Him to report it to them. They drafted the multitude as watchmen and detailed them out as civilians on private detective duty to find Christ. Policemen of today do the same thing but it is always to find criminals. The Pharisees used this criminating method to find a man who was continually "going about doing good." Their method betrayed their heart attitude. People do not look for their friends with revolvers.

(4) THEY USED INTIMIDATION

The Pharisees tried also to intimidate Christ. On one of His visits to Perea, east of Jordan, a delegation of Pharisees came and said, "Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee." What an appropriate time to try and scare Him. He was on the edge of the great desert of Arabia and could easily have made an escape from Herod's murderous axe which had destroyed so many. "Now is your chance," they intimated. "We've just heard the news and came to tell you." Did Jesus go? No. He sent a direct message to the "fox" and the next thing we see is Jesus healing lepers back in Herod's neighborhood.

(5) THEY FOLLOWED HIM

At times it seems that the Pharisees followed Christ from place to place, dogging His footsteps to hinder His work. They had done this with John the Baptist whose message had stirred up their opposition and here they were pursuing Christ. It is difficult for us to realize the sensations which Christ must have experienced in encountering members of this sect at every turn, always bent upon hindering Him (Mark 7:1; John 1:22).

(6) THEY CHALLENGED HIM

Once when Christ was in Galilee, just before the Feast of Tabernacles, His own brethren challenged Him to go up to Jerusalem and demonstrate His power. They said, "Depart hence, and go up into Judea, that thy disciples may see the works that thou doest" (John 7: 3-4). Again the Jews in the Temple challenged Him, "Whom makest thou thyself?"

No argument or proof silenced them for they kept up the challenge until His last expiring cry delivered Him from their taunts. While He hung on the cross they challenged Him saying, "If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him."

(7) THEY USED PREJUDICE

The Pharisees used every means in their power to break down faith in Christ because as long as people believed Him

they would not follow burdensome ceremonials. One of their most subtle practices was to prejudice people against Christ, for prejudice erects barriers over which faith has great difficulty in climbing. They thrust themselves before the seekers and threw the dust of prejudice in their eyes. The ruler of the Capernaum synagogue did this after Jesus had healed the man with the withered arm.

(8) THEY SLANDERED HIM

Spreading evil reports has always been the business of the enemies of God. When Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Ye are of your father the devil and the works of your father ye will do," He was reading their history. They cast reflections on His birth, said His miracles were done through Beelzebub, that He had not sufficient learning to enable Him to teach, that He was an associate of low caste people, that He ignored the ceremonials which formed the basis of their religious life. Never did the Pharisees commend Christ even for healing their sick.

(9) THEY DERIDED HIM

One day Jesus was teaching the Pharisees about faithful service. He gave the shortest, richest statement ever uttered on the subject. Said He, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" This got close home to the Pharisees.

The word "derided," was one of the strongest words used in describing the resistance of the Pharisees. Therefore, whatever caused it, would be one of their chief sins. The story gives it in one word, "covetous." Jesus had spoken to the whole multitude and the ones that were hit spoke out.

How the human race springs up in self-defense when you accuse it of being covetous! Saint Francis said he had had every sin he had ever known, and some he had never heard of, told him in the confessional, but he had never had one person confess the sin of covetousness.

(10) BOYCOTTED HIS WORK

Threatening was another method the Pharisees used against Christ's followers. It was a species of boycott. In John 9:22

and again in 12:42 we find the evidence recorded. They had not yet succeeded in silencing Christ so they had to employ other means to hinder His work for He was gaining converts. So they issued the terrifying edict that if anyone "confessed that he was Christ, he should be put out of the Synagogue."

It took a good deal of faith and courage for a man to turn away from Rabbis whom he had always believed could anathematize him for eternity and who could but speak the word and people would hinder him from earning a respectable living. Read the conversation of the healed blind man with the rulers, John 9, and see what sublime courage he showed. He knew they could put him where he would have a dog's life the rest of his days but he stood their fire and won. Their intimidation failed. The fact that his eyes could now see, created in him such a deep conviction that all the powers of the hierarchy could not shake him. The same was true of Luther, Knox, Huss, Tyndale, Latimer, and a multitude of others. They could all say, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." Peter saw the value of this when he wrote, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (II Peter 1:10).

(11) SENT SPIES TO CATCH HIM

Among the wiley tricks which the Pharisees played to entrap Christ, is the one in which they sought to get Him into trouble with the Roman officials. This was the method of the wolf in sheep's clothing. Let the Bible tell the story in its inimitable way. "And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor."

That seemed to be a well laid plot, for trouble with the governor meant prison, perhaps at Machaerus, where John the Baptist met his death, and that would end the story suddenly. So the flattering spies (Luke 20:21), well primed and coached as to their argument, came to Jesus in the Temple and asked, "Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Cæsar, or no?"

The ordinary listeners would have said, "Well, they have Him in a tight place now." Their minds would flash back over the history of Rome's dealings with tax-resisters, and

shudder. They would remember, too, what Gamaliel also recalled in Acts 5, concerning Theudas, who boasted of his power but who was slain with his four hundred, and of Judas, who arose in Galilee in the days of taxation but who was also punished.

The spies thought they had thrust Christ in where two mighty seas met. No answer could be given that would not offend the Romans or the Jews.

"But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me? Show me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's. And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's. And they could not take hold his words before the people: and they marveled at his answer; and held their peace." Such is the beauty of divine wisdom in answering the wisdom of the world.

(12) THEY USED SARCASM

Another subtle weapon which the Jews used against Christ was sarcasm. One stinging remark was, "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan?" To have said He was a publican, a leper or a criminal would have been no worse. They were bitter over His friendly relations with the Samaritans at Sychar and His story which exalted the good Samaritan over the priest and Levite.

Insinuations which would start adverse rumors were clothed in sarcasm and started out on their deadly mission. In John 7:34 Jesus said, "Where I am, thither ye cannot come." They quickly picked up His words and construed them to mean that His cause in Israel had failed and that He meant to seek other fields—among the Samaritans or Greeks or elsewhere. Little did they realize the truth of their words. Some months later Jesus uttered the same fact, "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43).

(13) REPROACHED HIM

Let everyone who thinks that Christ was not surrounded with soul conflicts, read the sixty-ninth Psalm. In verse eight

is a touching reference to the opposition of His own family relatives; verse twelve shows Him to be the popular jest of the song of blaggards who amuse the idlers loitering around the city gate. Verse twenty-five refers especially to Judas (cf. Acts 1:20). The key-verse may be the twentieth, which gives a vivid picture of His last day. "Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." What comfort, however, to read of His future joy. "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

(14) THEY CRIED "CRUCIFY HIM"

When divine grace is lacking in religious teaching its followers may run riot on any human tangent. We marvel at the viewpoint of the Pharisees and wonder how they could bring themselves to cry, "Crucify Him," when He only "went about doing good." Instead of yielding to believe the unanswerable proofs that Christ was the Messiah, they said, "This is the heir, come let us kill him that the inheritance may be ours." This astonishing conclusion began with an unbelieving murmur and ended with murder.

When the Sadducee priests sold the high priesthood to Rome they cut themselves off from being God's priestly representatives before Israel; when they turned the sacred temple courts into barnyards and sheep pens they destroyed their power to make it a house of prayer; when they set aside the Word of God for a hodgepodge of traditions and then exalted themselves to be autocratic priests, it affected them like a stupefying opiate and paralyzed their spiritual faculties. Everything before their vision became distorted. Error became truth, to them; their speculations were made divine laws; and their simple authority as priests suddenly became monarchial to an absolute degree. When they looked at Christ their benumbed vision twisted and perverted His every act and they cried, "Carpenter," "Beelzebub," "Winebibber," "Crucify Him," even though His miracles by the finger of God had been wrought before their eyes for three years.

How much they missed! How much they caused others to lose! How many people lost a much needed bodily healing!

How many missed Christ's gracious words! How many never knew His sweet fellowship—all because they feared the rulers.

It might have been theirs to have had Him grace their home at some frugal meal; to have heard Him pray for their family needs and commend them to His Father or to have had Him assure them of an eternal abode which He was going to prepare up where He was before. But they lost it all because they "feared the Pharisees." What a responsibility it was, and is, to be a Pharisee! How much they missed!